

# *Parking* 5

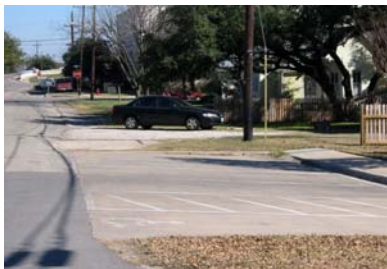


Figure 5.1: In the absence of curbs, most street parking and sidewalks have been installed in the City's right-of-way by individual property owners when their properties were converted to commercial uses. Similarly, some residential property owners have constructed parking areas, often unpaved, in front of their homes. The street improvement plan is in part intended to increase total on-street parking capacity by specifying consistent curb, sidewalk and parking patterns.

The availability of parking in the Southwest Downtown Plan Area (Plan Area) is one of the primary concerns of residents and business owners. This was revealed in the Southwest Downtown Survey of neighborhood opinion. Parking becomes increasingly important as single-family houses are converted to business uses.

## 5.1 Parking Plan Objectives

The parking plan presented in this chapter seeks to meet the following objectives:

- Residential parking should be provided on-site.
- On-street parking should be utilized to increase the availability of parking, to slow traffic, and to improve pedestrian safety.
- Surface parking lots should be located in the neighborhood to accommodate nearby businesses within a one- to two-block radius. Required parking for non-residential establishments could then be provided within five hundred feet of a business.
- Structured parking should be located underground or be designed to resemble a street-level building.
- Access to parking via alleys is appropriate where possible. Locating on-site parking at the rear of buildings is preferable in all cases.

- Alleys should remain clear and passable at all times.
- Generally, off-street parking should be located at the side or rear of buildings to ensure that entering and exiting vehicles do not interrupt pedestrian movement at the front of a building.
- The construction of new sidewalks and on-street parking will mean that existing parking areas in the street yard of properties in the Plan Area will no longer be accessible.
- Shared parking lots and shared parking access drives should be designed where feasible.

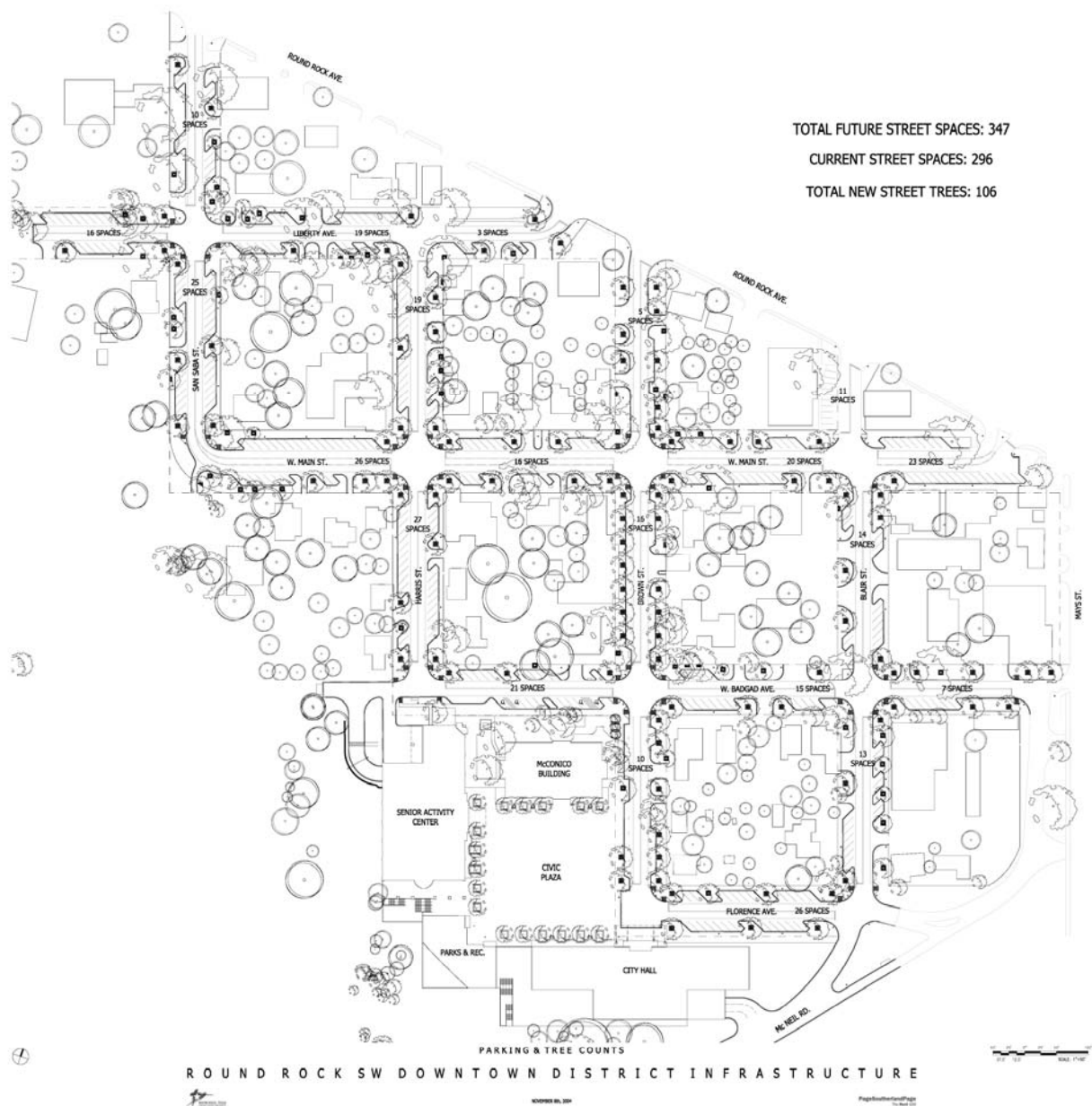
## **5.2 Southwest Downtown Plan Area Parking Plan**

This parking plan for the Plan Area consists of several elements that work together in order to meet the parking demand of those that visit, live, or work in the Plan Area. Several proposed elements are listed below along with recommended parking standards that could be adopted as a component of a proposed mixed-use zoning ordinance for the Plan Area.

### **1. Create On-Street Parking**

Street parking and associated curbs and gutters will be developed in the first phase of the Municipal Office Complex bond-funded Street Improvement Plan. Over three hundred and forty on-street parking spaces will eventually be provided, with angled parking spaces as the standard for the Plan Area. Parallel parking will be provided on Brown Street to create a boulevard effect to the future City Hall.

Because of the variety of block configurations, current on-street and street yard parking, and existing curb cuts, PageSoutherlandPage's design for on-street parking was addressed on a block by block basis as part of the Southwest Downtown Plan's (the Plan) public participation process.



**Figure 5.2: Distribution of Parking Spaces in Street Improvement Plan.** The Street Improvement Plan will eventually yield a total of 347 on-street parking spaces. Tree roots and utility placement may warrant minor modifications to the Street Improvement Plan.  
*Illustration: PageSoutherlandPage.*

Note: All municipalities are subject to the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act which requires municipalities to provide designated spaces for handicapped parking. The City of Round Rock is currently seeking state approval of a uniform handicapped parking plan for the Southwest Downtown Plan Area.

## 2. Provide On-Site Parking for the Municipal Office Complex

The City of Round Rock will provide parking for Municipal Office Complex employees and visitors.

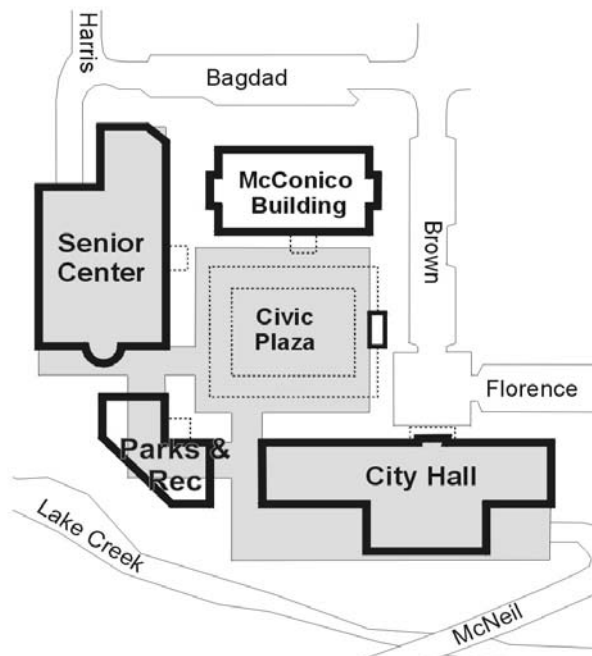


Figure 5.3: Two levels of underground parking (shaded) are part of the Municipal Office Complex (MOC) plans. These spaces will be open to the public after business hours.

## 3. Require That New Residential Uses Provide Parking On-Site

Residential uses are required to provide on-site parking spaces in all cases to ensure that residents have guaranteed parking spaces, and they will therefore not occupy on-street parking being used by patrons of local businesses.

The number of required residential spaces in the MU-1 is slightly reduced from standard residential zoning requirements as it is expected that units will be smaller than those in the average subdivision. Parking for single-family residences and townhouses is required to be covered but not enclosed in a garage. In a mixed-use project, off-street parking for residents must be clearly marked to distinguish it from employee or customer parking.

Figure 5.4: Proposed residential parking requirements for the Mixed-Use Zoning District.

Required Off-Street Parking Spaces	
Residential	
Use	# of Spaces
Single-family detached homes	2 spaces
Townhomes, upper-story residential units:	
one bedroom	1 space
two or more bedrooms	2 spaces
Efficiencies and lofts without defined bedrooms (including residential portion of live/work unit):	
under 800 sq ft	1 space
800 sq ft or more	2 spaces
<i>For special residential uses, such as senior or assisted living facilities, the Zoning Administrator may adjust requirements as appropriate for their populations.</i>	

#### 4. Create New Parking Requirements in the Proposed MU-1 District for Non-Residential Uses

Parking requirements are adjusted in the proposed Mixed-Use (MU-1) Zoning District to reflect the available street parking and the efficiency of a shared pool of parking for the entire Plan Area.

Figure 5.5: Proposed non-residential (restaurants, office, retail, etc.) parking requirements for the Mixed-Use Zoning District.

Required Off-Street Parking Spaces	
Non-Residential	
Use	# of Spaces
Restaurants	1 space / 200 sq ft GFA*
All other non-residential uses (office, retail, etc.)	1 space / 400 sq ft GFA*
<i>The GFA of a building at the time of the adoption of this ordinance is exempted from this parking requirement.</i>	

*\*Gross Floor Area (GFA) - The total area in square feet of all floors of a building measured from exterior walls.*

- The Gross Floor Area (GFA) of an existing non-residential building at the time of the adoption of the Ordinance is exempted from the required parking standard. However, expansions to the GFA of the building must meet the parking required for its use.
- In the event that a structure is demolished after the adoption of the Ordinance, a credit shall be granted for the GFA that existed on the lot, prior to demolition, at a ratio of 1 space for every 400 square feet of GFA. This credit shall only be applied to new non-residential development.
- An exemption of the required on-site non-residential parking may be issued by the City's Zoning Administrator to accommodate for parking constraints on the site. For example, an exemption may be appropriate is when a heritage tree (as defined in Chapter 7, Civic Design) is located on a lot, making it difficult to develop on-site parking.

## **5. Locate Public Surface Parking Lots in the Southwest Downtown Plan Area**

The City will be researching financing mechanisms and potential sites for strategically located public surface parking lots in the Plan Area. At some point, these surface parking lots could be converted into structured garage parking, as necessary.

### **5.3 Creating a Shared Parking Agreement**

For non-residential uses, shared parking facilities are encouraged where practical. Joint use of required parking spaces may occur where two or more establishments on the same site or on separate sites are able to share the same parking spaces because their parking demands occur at different times. Shared parking is beneficial because it reduces the number of parking spaces that need to be constructed while still meeting the demand for parking.

In order to utilize shared parking to meet parking standards, an agreement would be submitted as part of the

City's site development review process. The purpose of this review would be to ensure that a parking area will supply at least the minimum number of required spaces for each use during its respective peak parking time, as well as the location and number of parking spaces that are being shared. There may also be cases where an establishment has more than the required parking it needs, and the additional spaces could be leased to another establishment within five hundred feet. To implement a shared parking agreement, standards will need to be developed and adopted as an amendment to the City's Zoning Ordinance.

## **5.4 Status of Parking Plan at Time of Plan Adoption**

At the time of adoption of the Southwest Downtown Plan, construction of the street improvements has not commenced but is expected to begin in the first quarter of 2005. Well-defined on-street parking should help to alleviate some of the concerns of residents and business owners; however, continued assessments of the Plan Area will be necessary to ensure that parking demands are being met.

Due to the phased nature of infrastructure improvements, some new establishments may be created in advance of nearby on-street parking improvements. In the interim, owners may be required to pave and stripe parking spaces on the streets adjacent to their establishments. These temporary improvements should be in accordance with the proposed Street Improvement Plan.

As the Plan Area develops, it may be necessary to establish a parking district which would allow property owners with on-site parking constraints to pay into a fund. Funds collected could then be used to establish public parking in strategically placed locations in the Plan Area to help meet increasing parking demands.

## 5.5 Parking Recommendations

- Implement an overall parking strategy for the Southwest Downtown Plan Area that accommodates changes in density over time. This includes exploring options for public surface lots, commercial parking, and ultimately, structured garage parking.
- Maximize on-street parking. For streets that have not yet been improved, continue to use available on-street parking; however, temporary parking improvements may be necessary for non-residential uses until street improvements are completed.
- Require that residential uses provide parking on-site.
- Provide adequate parking for commercial buildings by emphasizing the use of on-street parking and shared parking facilities.
- Provide an exemption from parking requirements in the proposed Mixed-Use Zoning District for non-residential land uses where square footage of the existing building is not increased.
- Implement alternative parking standards to address the unique conditions of the Plan Area.
- Adopt shared parking agreement requirements as part of the parking requirements section of the City's Zoning Ordinance.
- Explore potential locations and financing mechanisms for public surface parking lots in the Plan Area.
- Design structured garage parking so it does not diminish the pedestrian experience, either through appropriate design or by constructing parking structures underground.
- Encourage access to parking via rear driveways and alleys.
- Ensure that alleys remain clear and passable at all times.